Claims

For the convenience of the Examiner, all pending claims are set forth below, whether or not an amendment is made. Please amend the claims as follows:

1.   (Canceled)

2.   (Canceled)

3.   (Canceled)

4.   (Canceled)

5.   (Canceled)

6.   (Canceled)

7.   (Canceled)

8.   (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A processing engine for a processing node of an electronic commerce distributed network, the processing engine comprising:

a plurality of communication units operable to communicate with participating organizations in a plurality of communication protocols, the plurality of communication units further operable to receive electronic commerce messages from originator organizations and communicate <u>said</u> electronic commerce messages to recipient organizations;

an engine operable to process an electronic commerce message received from an originator organization and to build an outgoing electronic commerce message for transmission to a recipient organization, wherein the engine accomplishes processing and building by:

accessing profiles that defines characteristics for the originator organization and the recipient organization; and

invoking selected functions from a matrix of functions where the selected functions are chosen based upon the profiles for the originator organization and the recipient organization; and

an interface unit coupled to and communicating with the plurality of communication units and the engine, the interface unit allowing incoming and <u>said</u> outgoing electronic commerce messages to be communicated between the plurality of communication units and the engine;

the processing engine providing electronic commerce interconnectivity for participating organizations that have different computer and communication environments.

10. (Original) The processing engine of Claim 9, wherein the interface unit is an X.400 unit operable to communicate using an X.400 protocol.

11. (Original) The processing engine of Claim 10, wherein the plurality of communication units comprise a P1 unit and a P7 unit.

12.   (Currently Amended) The processing engine of Claim 9, wherein the plurality of communication units includes a plurality of Internet mail units, and the processing engine further comprising a gateway coupled to the plurality of Internet mail units and the engine, the gateway operable to interface between a communication protocol of the plurality of internet mail units and a communication protocol of the interface unit.

13.   (Currently Amended)   The processing engine of Claim 12, wherein the plurality of Internet mail units comprise an SMTP unit, a MIME unit and a POP unit.

14.   (Original)   The processing engine of Claim 9, wherein the profiles of the originator organization and the recipient organization are accessible via an external user interface.

15.   (Canceled)

16.   (Canceled)

17.   (Canceled)

18.   (Canceled)

19.   (Canceled)

20.   (Canceled)